



Director of  
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WESTERN EUROPE - MIDDLE EAST: Diplomatic Activity

*West European countries remain concerned about the lack of progress on Lebanon and on Arab-Israeli disputes, and they may increase their diplomatic efforts in the Middle East.*

Danish Foreign Minister Ellemann-Jensen will visit Israel tomorrow in his capacity as EC Council President. EC sources indicate that he is likely to urge the Israelis to show greater diplomatic flexibility and to protest their policies on West Bank settlements.

Ellemann-Jensen has said publicly that he is willing to meet with PLO chief Arafat.

French Foreign Ministry officials have told the US Embassy that Paris is willing to talk with Lebanese Christians and Druze to try to resolve their conflict in the Shuf. Foreign Minister Cheysson is reportedly concerned that the fighting in the Shuf and lack of progress on withdrawal of foreign forces could cause President Jumayyil to lose control of the political situation.

Meanwhile, a senior Portuguese military officer has indicated to the US that Lisbon may be willing to contribute troops to the multinational force. Although Israel is willing to accept Portuguese participation, Lisbon has not yet formally considered the issue.

Comment: Ellemann-Jensen's visit to Israel probably is designed only to maintain EC links with Tel Aviv.

French concern about the situation in the Shuf could add to the reported skepticism in the Foreign Ministry about the wisdom of expanding or even maintaining the French contribution to the multinational force. President Mitterrand, however, probably is still committed to participation in the force.

A Portuguese role in the multinational force probably would depend on the availability of outside financial support.

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